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221 ment. This section describes the methods of securing the principal raw materials—berries, brush, water, wood, game, fish, fur, and garden produce.

222 Collecting. Berries, moss, spruce brush, spruce gum, and eggs are collected. In summer
221 the tops of the wild onion plant may be pulled for use in soup, and a parsnip-like tuber is sometimes dug. Most berry picking occurs in late summer, but girls may still pick a few high bush cranberries while visiting the rabbit lines in early winter. When women and
● [431] girls return to camp with berries, they may offer a share to women who did not participate in the picking. Men will often stop while traveling to pick from an abundant supply of blueberries or low bush cranberries.

Moss is pulled from the ground and piled in a small piece of canvas which is folded together for transportation. In winter the woman scrapes away the snow with her hands or snowshoes and uses an ax to chop out a frozen area of moss. After the moss is dried out it is used to pad children's diaper cloths. When used to chink log cabins, moss is not dried. Spruce brush for use as a camp floor is cut by the women. A number of small trees may be dragged into camp and then trimmed. More rarely, a little brush is obtained by cutting away the lower branches of a standing tree. Spruce gum is pealed off a red spruce tree in
[264] the course of traveling and chewed immediately. In June or July a hunter occasionally finds the eggs of spruce hens or willow grouse. The eggs are gently shaken or tapped to ascertain if there is a young bird inside; should this be the case, they are said to be returned to the nest.

312 Water is obtained from rivers, streams, and lakes in one or two quart covered cooking vessels by the women. In winter the ice of the river is chopped through and this must be done several times a day or else the hole will soon freeze over again. Snow may be melted to secure water. Stagnant marsh water is avoided whenever a better source of running water is not too far distant.

313 Collecting wood for fuel is time consuming in the winter season. An open camp fire in
[462] summer or fall imposes relatively little effort so far as fuel gathering is concerned. Most families wait till twilight to gather a large enough supply of poles to keep the fire going until bedtime. In winter, gathering fuel for an open fire is more laborious, since enough wood has to be collected to provide heat till morning. Except for rotten spruce wood used in smoking hides, it is ideally the man's task to bring wood into camp. In practice, however, women and girls assist. Keeping a stove going in winter requires so much fuel that it is not possible to rely on the supply of dead wood lying around a settlement. Therefore, in order to insure an adequate winter wood supply for a settlement, sufficient trees must be dried two or more years in advance. Two methods are used for drying trees, burning and girdling. In the former procedure, small tracts of timber are fired when the wind is right. The fire kills the trees and in a year or so the wood is dry enough for fuel. More often red spruce trees, from six to twenty inches in diameter, are girdled. This process will dry a tree in about two years. Jackpine is sometimes dried by felling a number of trees, cleaning off the limbs, and then stacking the poles upright against a clump of willows to dry. In about three years this wood will be thoroughly dry, although half-dry jackpine is used in open fires and green jackpine is burned in heaters. A sufficient amount of wood is rarely cut to last more than a short time. Each spring there is usually a severe shortage of wood, and any deadwood lying around the settlement, including discarded artifacts, is utilized for heat.

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its own grub and this principle is rigidly adhered to in summer, when the people live in Lower Post within easy contact of the stores. In winter, however, shortages of grub frequently arise and a family often has to be assisted until it has accumulated sufficient fur to undertake a journey to the trading post to restock depleted supplies.

Periods of hunger often occur among the Kaska. There are several reasons why this happens. A man sometimes errs in estimating his winter outfit. Often a minimal supply of grub must be shared with more unfortunate relatives. A man may also lack the money or credit to buy sufficient food. When any one or a combination of these conditions occur, and the family cannot kill sufficient meat to take the place of grub, acute and serious food shortage results. Hunger is never pleasant to the Indian, yet the average man and woman is able to accept temporary periods of food shortage without emotional alarm and overtly tends to minimize such experiences. Despite the anxiety concerning food, most people do not carefully review their winter outfits. As a result, shortages are discovered only when the supply of a particular commodity is already almost exhausted.

A period of hunger was reported to have occurred in Old Man's settlement during the winter of 1939-40. All the grub had been eaten and there was no meat. Included in the several families living in this settlement at the time were Old Wiley, his wife, and children. They had not purchased a winter outfit. "They always had no grub. Old Wiley never trap," Old Man explained. "Girls, got they tough, they strong. They didn't feel its hungry. They sing around, cut wood." After four days with scarcely any food, Old Man's son-in-law, Harry Lang, killed a dozen chickens, and then Old Man brought down nine more fowl. Everybody ate chicken. The following day Harry left again to hunt moose. He killed one moose but lost another. "I got one marten," Old Man related. "I got seven skin that time." He took the marten and traveled to a white man's home twenty miles upriver. This white trapper gave Old Man "nearly two hundred pound grub for one marten. Here it is, we come back with load of grub. Here it is, they all left. They went to Excited Lake. We got to Excited Lake. Everybody hungry." The people had already consumed the whole of Harry's moose. "We come in with grub. I think it last about three days." In March, Harry took Old Man's skins to Lower Post from where he returned with a sledful of grub.

Associated with the familiarity of hunger is the fact that people are always ready to accept food. A gift of food is recognized as one of the most important presents. In children the desire for food shows itself starkly, being as yet unmodified by socially patterned inhibitions on emotional expression. Young boys entering the ethnographer's home and seeing his children eating stared avidly and sometimes scrambled at leftovers which were abandoned on the plates.

For most of the Indians the ideal diet consists of a balance between meat and grub. These need not necessarily appear together at every meal but some meat in the course of a day is regarded as indispensable. Either a diet of straight meat without grub or straight grub without meat is regarded as unfortunate. Not only is a straight grub diet less appetizing, but people are aware that rations on such food causes staples to diminish rapidly and therefore increases the danger of running short. Living on straight grub also involves a greater expense; meat is free, but grub must be purchased at relatively high prices. Only one or two old women, like Mrs. Man, are content with a straight meat diet accompanied by little more

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The principle function of the moiety lie is the regulation of reveal- [431]
age through the rule of exogamy and the organization of potlatches. The former function 616
constitutes the manifest explanation for adhering to these divisions. Thus River Joe explained that the moieties, going far back in time, serve to prevent anyone from getting "mixed up" and marrying a too closely related person. Any ideas of the superiority of one side over the other could not be adduced.

Certain individuals identified with the Kaska Indians lack affiliation with any side. 616
These are either Slave Indians, who have married into the Kaska nation, or else members of 608
the Nelson tribe. The latter people never followed the moiety pattern of their neighbors. Such individuals generally receive a conventional moiety identification when they marry a member of either exogamous group. No gesture is made toward formalizing such allegiance, the person being verbally identified with the appropriate side or being told to eat with that side at a potlatch. A woman whose moiety membership has been determined by convention transmits this affiliation to her children. There is no question, however, but that such conventional affiliations are less binding than more clearly established moiety membership. Children of a woman whose affiliation was established by convention are often permitted to marry endogamously and even the grandchildren of such a woman are recognized as having extremely weak ties with other members of their side. Sometimes an effort is made to regularize the apparent endogamy of such marriages by having one of the spouses alter her moiety membership. Thus Old Man married the Cree-Kaska daughter of a Cree woman from Fort Nelson. The first Mrs. Man was commonly regarded as a Crow. After she married Old Man, a Crow, however, she was designated as a Wolf. Some people were encountered who had "forgotten" their side and thereafter married girls whom, they later discovered, belonged to their moiety. Louis Mesa married a Wolf woman although he himself had been born of a Wolf mother. He later changed his membership to the Crow side. It must not be supposed that such forgetting is common. Louis blamed the priests for having "mixed up" the people regarding their moiety affiliations.

All of the Kaska Indians and Sekani who trade into Lower Post (but excluding the 621
Frances Lake people who generally frequent their own trading post), local white traders, the missionaries, white trappers, and government functionaries may be recognized as members of the community—a "maximal group of persons who normally reside together in face-to-face association."[9] A number of Takhtan Indians from the area southeast and south of Lower Post also frequently visit the settlement and these may be recognized as temporary members of the community. The one or two Takhtan families who maintain permanent residences in Lower Post are, of course, full fledged members. Social interaction between these people is largely restricted to summer and is maintained through visiting; attendance at dances, church, and school; friendship; marriage; gambling and loitering. The total community, as has already been described, gathers in the spring and is dissolved in late summer, when most of its members disperse to their trapping districts and winter settlements. Community interaction during the Christmas and other winter visits to the post is primarily supported through visiting and encounters in the restaurant and bunkhouses.

The Indian section of the community (hereafter referred to as the Indian community) tends to divide itself into three sections, roughly corresponding to the tribal groups trading

[9] Murdock, et al., Outline of Cultural Materials (1947), vii.

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parents, and should not be spent without the owner's consent. The traps used by a wife or 422
child belong to the man, but, as already pointed out, any fur which is caught in them belongs to the individual trapper. The man hunts and buys food, but once food is in camp it is controlled by the woman. A woman will seldom alienate any grub without first consulting her husband.

*Property transactions.* Three main forms of property transactions can be distinguished: 425
appropriation, alienation by gift, and alienation by lending. Other forms of alienation, such as destruction, owning, and selling either occur rarely or not at all.

Appropriation often takes place when a son or son-in-law helps himself to his father's or father-in-law's goods without having any formal right of access to such property. Harry Lang appropriated a number of his father-in-law's tools, which he subsequently loaned to the ethnographer, designating them as his own. When Old Man saw these tools he pointed out his claim of ownership but beyond this made no effort to resume control. Old Kean's adult sons several times appropriated their father's cigarettes and food. This made the old man angry but, beyond buying new locks for those that had been broken, he was unable to enforce his control. In early summer, Old Man had cached a large portion of the subsequent winter's outfit at Louis Man's place. In the fall Old Man expressed the fear that Louis Man was using his dog meat and other goods. Asked if this was "all right," Old Man unequivocally replied: "That's all right. Maybe he figger that's because I use his boat." On another occasion, as he was packing for a journey, Louis Man's partner, Peter Tom, produced a flashlight. Louis picked up the light and said he would "hold" it until Peter came back, adding that he could use a flash if he had to look for something at night. Peter responded without a word to the appropriation. When people are drunk, they often quite unjudiciously appropriate food. One night Old Man was sleeping off a drunk in Lower Post. When he awoke he discovered that his friends had helped themselves to a carton full of canned meat and fruit, leaving only the empty box. "Not stealing," Old Man said in response to the ethnographer's question. "Just they hungry and thirsty and eat." He was, however, far from pleased. In the Yukon, where trap lines are not registered, even trap lines may be appropriated. When Old Wiley died, leaving several daughters, the Wiley line was appropriated by his adjoining neighbors, Louis Man and Old Wiley's brother-in-law, Old Man. Old Man, however, explained that he had originally given the ground to Old Wiley after the latter had followed him in settling on the Upper Liard. The appropriation of the Wiley line was contested by at least one of the Wiley daughters who, after the ethnographer returned to Lower Post from Old Man's place, interrogated him as to where the old man was trapping.

In gift giving, there is a wide gap between theory and practice. Ideally: "Who's poor 431 ●
luck, help him out little bit," said John Kean. "Help one another. Lazy man never think what he's going to live on . . . I help him out. I think . . . might be be better next winter. Might be help me sometime." He explained that a stranger in camp is always asked if he wants to eat. A friend, however, is told to help himself to food. "We don't worry about it. Glad to do it." Only when a man persists too long in living on another person's generosity would he be told to go into the bush and trap for himself. Even then a generous man will ideally make a friend to a hundred dollars or so for capital goods and food.

Idealistically we can classify gifts into two kinds, those made spontaneously and those

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431 which follow a request for assistance. The meat of large game animals is always readily distributed, even when a family is living with unrelated people. Other spontaneous gifts are made relatively rarely and then only in well defined cultural contexts. The most common of these presents include purchased trade goods; manufactures, such as moccasins; meat, berries, and brew. A few people exchange purchased trade goods at Christmas. Native manufactures may be given by a woman to her husband or brother. Spontaneous gifts, excepting meat, are frequently reciprocated within a few days or weeks and such reciprocity is usually expected, although not clearly formalized. Hospitality may be recognized as a special form of free gift giving, but is not carried to extremes and few people visit for any length of time without supplying their own grub. Persistent demands for hospitality are, first covertly and then soon overtly, resented, since, particularly in the winter settlement, the supply of grub is limited and often barely enough to see a family through to spring.

Most gifts follow a call for assistance. Such requests may be outright, but are more generally advanced by implication. It is far more satisfactory if a person has his offhand statement of being low on raisins or moosehide fulfilled by a gift of such goods than if he has to request the objects directly. Although requests are commonly fulfilled, this is not necessarily done in a spirit of generosity and the realization of covert resentment operates to reduce calls for help. In return for his response, however, the donor enhances his reputation for generosity. Nevertheless this reputation dare not be too widely advertised, for fear that it will boomerang in the form of additional requests. Actually more people were described to the ethnographer as being stingy than were praised for their generosity. The [809] reluctance of most people to make demands for goods or grub, particularly to non-relatives, also prevents a person's generosity from being abused. It is more or less understood that following assistance, the recipient will reciprocate the favor when he is called upon to do so. Actually many people chronically seek help without being able to contribute anything but cooperation in return, and this they are usually very unwilling to offer. The result is that the onus of giving rests upon a few older men who have been able to accumulate food and goods and who are generally extremely resentful of the role in which they are placed. Their antagonism reveals itself in ungenerous giving which in turn does not pass unnoticed and stimulates resentment in neighbors.

426 Loans differ from gifts in that they are made with the stronger expectation of the return of the object or its equivalent. Capital goods, as we have shown, are readily loaned. Grub, on the other hand, being more valuable, is more reluctantly shared in this fashion. Loans of money are occasionally made in summer with no interest being charged. It is not infrequent that loans fail to be repaid. Old Man reported lending skins to his son-in-law, Hans, who needed supplies but had no money. "I did it," Old Man said, "but he never let me have it [back]. If he stronger man, I bother him, but no use—he marry my daughter."

425 A final word may be added concerning the relatively rare incidence of the destruction 768 of goods. This is limited to the worn clothes of the deceased, which are burned or abandoned after death, the rationalization being that they may carry disease and in this way threaten the surviving members of a family. A tent in which death has occurred is also sometimes abandoned for the same reason. Food of any kind is never destroyed.

428 *Inheritance.* Like most of the property transactions already referred to, the processes of

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431 Potlatch. Apart from Christmas parties tendered to children by the missionaries, the
576 most important festival is the potlatch. This occasion is ideally a presentation of food by the
616 members of one matrilineal moiety to those of the other and is designed to honor the memory of one or more deceased members of the hosts' side. The "Wolf party" observed in 1945, however, included guests belonging to both moieties and was organized and financed by a Crow man and his Wolf daughters. A few days after the Wolf party, Louis Maza apologized, explaining that he was "a little crazy" the day of the potlatch when he had let both moieties eat. He blamed his confusion on having been intoxicated the morning of the festival. His apology indicated that people had commented on the mixing, regarding it as incorrect. Louis stated that the subsequent Crow party would not be mixed. His promise was partly fulfilled, in that eating was limited to adult guests of the Wolf side, but children belonging to both moieties were served. Prior to 1945, the last potlatch in the Kaska area is reported to have taken place at McDame Creek around 1930.

431 Ideally a potlatch is organized by a deceased person's brothers or maternal uncles.
616 Manifestly, however, fathers, daughters, and husbands were observed to organize these parties. The male organizers undertake the task of securing the food to be eaten, while sisters and female parallel cousins cooperate in the cooking and serving. The Wolf party,
[765] which was designed to honor the memory of Mrs. River Joe who had died nine months previously, was directed by River Joe and his son-in-law, Louis Maza (both Crow), while the food preparation was under the control of Joe's several Wolf daughters and their parallel cousins. This potlatch, like the following Crow party, was celebrated in Louis Maza's large home. Financial support was contributed by a majority of the members of the Wolf side, about $120 being collected. The functions of the party, as stated by River Joe, were to "help" the deceased, to have "fun," and to "Make good time for [in memory of] my missus." A chronological record of events marking the first potlatch of 1945 is given below.

431 6:11:45. In the presence of River Joe, Old Man explained that there might be a potlatch in
484 memory of River Joe's wife who died last October. He explained that Skipper or the latter's brother could "make" such a potlatch, because they belonged to the dead woman's side.

7:1:45. River Joe went to Teslin Lake in order to fetch his daughter and the latter's Taku Indian husband.

7:5:45. River Joe returned from Teslin Lake in his son-in-law's truck. He was fired with the idea of giving a "potlatch party" for his wife but quite resented the notion that this would be an old fashioned procedure, pointing out that at Teslin village the Indians all observed this custom.

7:6:45. River Joe and his sons-in-law, Louis Maza and the Taku youth, went to the Hudson's Bay Company with the latter's truck. Here they bought a large quantity of food and piled it in the back of the vehicle which then proceeded to Louis' home where the cooking would be done. River Joe announced he would collect money from the members of his wife's side who were camping across the river.

431 7:7:45. Today River Joe's daughters cooked and baked for the Wolf party tomorrow. River Joe said that his daughters were giving the potlatch for their mother, but that he had also contributed fifteen dollars to the expenses. "Me boss that party. Bye and bye somebody boss his missus. He boss for him." He agreed that the decision for a potlatch was (could be?) in the hands of the widower. Louis Maza indicated that the potlatch might last for six days and refused to consider the possibility of the police blocking it as a result of the meningites quarantine attached to the reserve where his house is located.

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7:8:45. The final preparations for the potlatch were delayed five or six hours, because Louis Maza had been extremely drunk last night and was still sleeping early in the afternoon. #31

6:00 P.M. River Joe's daughters set the potlatch tables on the floor of Louis' cabin.

6:30 P.M. River Joe went to the missionary to borrow a large pot for brewing coffee.

6:45 P.M. Louis Maza took his boat across the river to bring back potlatch guests. People started to walk up the river road from town to Louis' house.

7:00 P.M. Louis and Joe held a conference at which Louis suggested that both Crow and Wolf people eat. River Joe said: "All right, I guess."

7:30 P.M. River Joe suggested (for the ethnographer's benefit?) that somebody pay Dorothy Plover's grandmother to start the potlatch dance and teach it to others. The woman apologized and said that she did not know the dance too well.

7:40 P.M. Louis explained that the potlatch could not start until those people who had gone to church for the evening service were dismissed by the missionary. [797]

8:00 P.M. Louis went to the guests who had come for the party and requested their dishes and eating utensils. He took these into the house and helped his sisters-in-law to arrange them around the tables. When the dishes were in place Louis began to point to people, telling them "Go in, eat." Men began to file in. The old men without wives sat themselves against the west wall of the room. The soup was brought to them, but they waited before eating until all others who were to eat at the first sitting were in their places. After the soup, the dishes were rinsed and filled with two varieties of canned meat and fish (sausages, a slice of bacon, and salmon), mashed potatoes, and peas. Tea was also served. All the food was put on the plates by River Joe's Taku son-in-law and brought to the guests by Joe's daughters and paternal niece.

8:10 P.M. The cassocked priest drove his truck up to the door of the potlatch house and called in to ask if Richard Day and Peter Tom wanted to ride to Watson Lake with him (the two youths were employed there to cut wood). The boys did not reply and avoided meeting the gaze of the priest. When the missionary left with his exhaust exploding loudly, Louis Maza said: "That's not the only job in the world." "To hell with him," River Joe added. Although the two hosts did not mention it, they seemed annoyed with the priest's unceremonious behavior. [797]

About twenty-two adults and children ate at the first sitting. After finishing the meal the guests helped themselves to the cakes, cookies, jam, pies, and doughnuts which were set in the middle of each table. Sugar, butter, and canned milk were also provided. During the eating, Louis Maza sat on the bed with his wife, who was recovering from a complicated parturition. Children entered and left at will, coming to parents when they wanted some delicacy and then running out again. A number of children hung around the door looking. Most people, when they had finished eating, turned their cups down on the plates and filed out of the building without a word. A few men patted their stomachs and remarked what a good meal they had eaten. As one man left the house he shook hands with River Joe whereupon the latter said: "Tomorrow come again." While people were leaving, River Joe repeated the announcement that fruit was available in boxes piled along one wall; nobody heeded his suggestion. The dirty dishes were removed and rinsed by the servers, assisted by Joe's Taku son-in-law.

9:00 P.M. The second sitting began to enter the potlatch house. As Dorothy Plover's grandmother entered she did a little dance, shifting from one foot to the other, one hand with the index finger erect raised from the elbow. This provoked a ripple of amusement. [535]

9:30 P.M. A few people entered the building for the final serving. Wolf women from the Dease River tribe took over the task of serving and dishwashing, giving River Joe's daughters and niece a chance to leave the house.

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431 In contrast to the enthusiasm invested in the preparations for the party, there was very
521 little emotional display at the meal itself, and several signs were observed of people being ill at ease. Thus it was necessary for Louis Maza repeatedly to urge people to go into the house and eat. Except among some old men, there was little sign of gaiety or festivity. As each man filed into the building he removed his hat and silently took his place. Conversation during the meal was slight.

431 Plans to revive the old fashioned potlatch dance were not fulfilled. A number of older
535 people were finally persuaded to line up and execute a few movements, but this behavior
178 was not spontaneous and the embarrassed laughter of the younger folks apparently disconcerted the dancers.

431 After having eaten, the guests gathered outside the house where two fires were built
616 against the chill of the evening. Five gallons of coffee were heating alongside one fire. Louis Maza several times distributed cigars and cigarettes around the two circles of guests as well as oranges to the children, who were enjoying a riotous time. After the dishes had been washed by the women of the Wolf sib, the guests reentered the house to retrieve their cups, plates, and tableware. Considerable confusion resulted in this distribution and many people were unable to find their own objects. Even Louis Maza lost several of his own utensils, all of which suggests that some people, who had not come with tableware, went home with utensils not belonging to them.

[685]

On the day following the potlatch meal, a number of Crow people returned to Louis' house where his wife and her sisters distributed packages of food, tins of jam that had never been touched, fruit, and cake left over from the party.

The second potlatch on July 13 was designed as a return party by the Crow moiety. Louis placed himself in charge of the preparations and was assisted by his father-in-law. The cooking and serving were undertaken by Dorothy Plover, her cousin, and the ethnographer, who was conventionally designated as a Crow. The food was cooked in the residence of a white trader and transported to the potlatch in Louis Maza's boat. In Louis' house it was kept warm on the stove. The potlatch this time began at one o'clock in the afternoon and was completed by six o'clock. Behavior held to the same emotional tenor that was described for the first party except that considerable amusement was furnished by the several white trappers who attended while intoxicated but who caused no trouble. No attempt was made to introduce dancing, although a social dance in Liard Tom's house was announced as a part of the festival and took place later in the evening.

533 *Music.* The only musical instruments played by the Kaska are the violin and guitar.
534 Many men are accomplished "fiddlers," while most boys and girls can play accompaniments
177 on the guitar. All musical ability is patiently self-taught and is motivated by the individual's personal desire to learn. A new tune is generally picked up by listening to a Tahltan Indian visitor play it. The Tahltan, in turn, learn new melodies by listening to the recorded words and music. Such double, and sometimes triple, transmission by ear results in a melody often being considerably altered from its original form. The most popular tunes include: "I Know What It Means to be Lonely," "Take Me Back to Tulsa," "My Dixie Darling," "Wabash Cannonball," "Red River Valley," and "You Are My Sunshine." These are not only played at dances but are often sung or whistled around town and camp. Local Tahltan

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157 additional materials to complete the roof whose requirements were underestimated. Lack
X181 of preparedness was evidenced when Irene Wiley, after heating water to wash clothes, discovered that she lacked soap powder.

All of these behaviors, involving planning for relatively immediate goals, reveal not only utilitarian antipathy to conceptualization and systematization, but are also relaxed, indecisive modes of attending to problems of living. They reveal the operation of a flexible motivation that is not bound by rigorous rules. In packing and storage we find a similar lack of compulsive order, no indication of a notion like: "A place for everything and everything in its place." Consequently, houses and camps furnish a picture of considerable confusion, despite which, given time (and time is not a Kaska value), a required object can usually be found. Lack of physical ordering is carried over into the lack of any purposeful ground plan where people camp or in the placing of buildings within a winter settlement. In these situations Kaska behavior is also motivated by personal inclination.

157 In company with poor systematization, we find grandiose planning. A social event, like
X181 a potlatch, gambling game, or dance, for which there is strong anticipation, often results in exaggerated ideas of its scope. An example of this tendency occurred in connection with
0431 the first potlatch, when Louis Maza enthusiastically declared: "That potlatch keep a-going." River Joe agreed equally heartily, saying: "Have fun! Six days! Nobody stop that potlatch. Police can't stop him. Injun law!" Obviously the hosts were not buying enough food for six days of feasting but, we thought, perhaps they would initiate various entertainments during the week. Nobody, however, mentioned entertainment. Originally a midday and an evening dinner were planned for the first day of the potlatch. When the shortage of vegetables was noted, the plans were altered, it being decided to eat once, at midday, and then serve tea and refreshments in the late afternoon. The festival actually began at seven o'clock in the evening, with none of the other plans materializing. Such exaggeration was possible, and wishes were free to be expressed, because of the absence of any realistic conceptualization of the total situation.

157 Unrealistic planning was also illustrated when River Joe engaged a bulldozer to build a
X181 road on an Indian reserve without first ascertaining the cooperativeness of the other members of the community, or whether they would, as he expected, contribute to the expense of the project. As a result of his enthusiasm, Joe paid the major share of the cost himself and subsequently had further cause to regret his zeal, when the road opened the reserve to police cars.

In discussing planning toward future ends, we find ourselves confronted by an apparent contradiction. We have characterized Kaska personality by a tendency to ignore future responsibilities, but we must now account for future ideals like saving, being prepared with grub for trapping, and trapping toward an adequate standard of living during the following year. Partial explanation lies in the relative emotional strength of these conflicting attitudes. One set is more congruent to the basic motivations than the other. This is demonstrated by the fact that, although voiced, future ideals are not easily implemented by action. We may adopt Horney's distinction between beliefs and values to conceptualize the difference more sharply.[28] Beliefs are relatively superficial attitudes, which are not deeply

[28] Horney, *Our Inner Conflicts* (1945), 25-26.

off trees quickly and picked things off the ground quickly praying meanwhile that her movements would always be quick and her fingers always nimble. She ran up hill and asked that her wind would always be good. She crossed below where water was trickling or oozing and after passing directed the water into one channel and made it flow past the place where she had crossed. Then she prayed, "May no harm or sickness cross my path or follow me". 881

The girl's mother gave her a pack of dried fish and other food. When little girls visited her she gave them some to eat and also some to take to different people. She did this until all had been distributed. When the last had been given away she prayed, "May I always have food to give away, and may I always think of giving to others. May I always be liberal and never stingy". 881 431

The mother hid in the girl's lodge some small fancy thing, or pretty thing or something nicely beaded and told her to look around as she might find something. The girl searched and on finding the article prayed that she would always be lucky in finding good things and valuable things, that good things would come to her easily, that she would be favored with plenty of furs and other valuables, that she would, as it were, pick up wealth, and that she would find a good husband. 881

591 generally they lived with the bridegroom's people and only visited the friends of the bride.

Whether the husband stayed chiefly with his wife's people or his own did not matter, for during his [431] life time he was under obligation to give presents of food or other things to his wife's parents from time to time, and this was always expected of him. The wife was considered the property of her husband and his people, but this did not mean that others of his male relatives or phratry had any rights of intercourse with her, at least during her husband's life-time. Their [611] children, if they had any, belonged by right to the wife's people, being by descent members of their mother's phratry.

768 In case of death of their father or mother the children, if young, were taken in charge by their mo- [687] ther's people. It seems this was more particularly the case if the mother died and the father did not marry his 582 deceased wife's sister. Marriages between members of different clans and bands were encouraged because of the advantage of thus securing the right of hunting in different grounds.

Early marriages were believed in and most girls were married soon after they had finished their training at puberty. It is stated there were even some cases where girls were married before they were mature or had become pubescent.

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Upper Liard



of a child (first born?) with a meal to which friends were invited. The first game killed by a youth also became the occasion for a "party." A wealthy man honored his daughter in the same way when she attained menarche or married. Marriage feasts often constituted potlatches, at which the bride's mother aided by her brothers and sisters presented gifts of manufactured objects to the members of the opposite matrilineal moiety. While no elaborate death feast took place a memorial potlatch followed about a year after the death.[30] In winter people enjoyed the Biggest Cache Feast, presented by a man who owned a particularly rich meat cache. Huge quantities of cooked ground hog and gopher and birch-bark dishes filled with grease were served to the guests. Perhaps serving as a hint for someone to provide lavish entertainment, members of the Crow moiety occasionally arranged a mock feast. When the invited guests assembled they found very little food available, "just a bite for everybody." Amused, the guests exclaimed, "A Wolverine Party!" One moiety or the other would then usually announce a more satisfying repast.

The origin of the potlatch is explained in the following tale.

A girl was pregnant. When she was ready to have her baby she went into seclusion behind the dwelling. Here one day as the sun was setting her father heard her talking and laughing. The people did not know that she had given birth to a monster. The girl returned to her parents but the monster grew large and ate many people. He was almost a hundred feet long and had a great, wide mouth. Everybody wanted to kill the thing but nobody was able to do so. One day the people sent the girl away. That is when they killed the monster. When the mother returned she cried like hell because this had been her child. The girl cried so much that the old man became frightened. So the old man made a big potlatch and gave away many things. Pretty soon the girl felt better. Since then the Indians had a potlatch everytime somebody died.

To prepare a potlatch a host first had to secure sufficient quantity of manufactured goods and food that could be distributed. While some of the objects came from members of the donor's matrilineal moiety and need not be repaid, the responsibility for some of the contributions rested with the potlatcher and his family. The distribution of many fine things and large amounts of food won prestige for a man. From such behavior he won the reputation of being a "big man." But only a very capable hunter could acquire enough meat and skins to provide an elaborate give-away. Previous to the party the assembled wealth lay displayed in the dwelling on a mat of rawhide or a bear skin. The potlatcher then proceeded to invite his guests, all members of the opposite moiety. A small ceremony was attached to the invitation. The host, visiting a guest's home, planted his walking stick inside the entry and uttered the syllable, "nix!"[31] The visitors assembled in the potlatch house where brothers and sisters of the potlatcher served them food. After they had finished eating the host distributed gifts through his assistants. There occurred much joking at this stage of the proceedings. For example, a server, following the typical Athapaskan pattern of humor, would pretend to throw a visitor's present

[30] See below, p. 139, for details of a "small" death feast.

[31] Messenger sticks have been described for the Nunivak Eskimo. Here they were used by the message carrier who invited people to a social climbing feast. (Lantis, *Social Culture of the Nunivak Eskimo* [1946], 188.) The distribution of similar insignia among the Eskimo of Alaska is discussed in the same writer's *Alaskan Eskimo Ceremonialism* [1947], 69–72.) The trait is not mentioned in Drucker's check list of the Pacific Coast. Drucker, *Culture Element Distributions: XXVI, Northwest Coast* (1950).

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into the fire. The recipient would cry out, "I win that!" A host gave presents with an eye to what he had already received, the more elaborate objects being presented to people who had given him good gifts in the past. A person who had given poorly received a relatively less valuable present.

When the gifts had all been allocated, a rawhide curtain was erected in the dwelling, supported from two poles held by members of the host's moiety. Members of the potlatcher's group retired behind the curtain and decorated themselves with masks, feathers, and animal skins for dancing.[32] Members of the opposite moiety painted the faces of like-sexed dancers. Costumes did not include ceremonial wigs or aprons. When they were ready the dancers called for the curtain to be removed and began dancing to the rhythm of drums and potlatch songs. After one moiety had performed the guests allowed their faces to be painted and in turn also danced. Crow dancers sometimes ran their hands upward along the faces of the Wolf people, brushing the latter's hair away from the face. Celebrations lasted as long as four days, large meals being served every evening. In the night people gambled far into the morning. Competitive grease-drinking contests were also featured at potlatches, winners receiving their rewards in arrows and other useful prizes. Besides marking puberty, marriage, and anniversaries of death, potlatches constituted a ritual means of reducing hostility between moieties. Thus if a member of the Crow side had killed a Wolf he might avoid the open resentment of the other moiety by assembling wealth and inviting members of the offended side to attend his potlatch. The exchange of ceremonial civilities between the two parties erased all memory of the offense.

*Dease River Kaska.* Averaging about 15 or 16 inches in diameter, the tambourine drum of semi-tanned moose hide furnished the chief musical instrument of the Kistagotena. Only shamans decorated these objects with symbols representing the sky, moon, and stars. Along with the drum people provided rhythm with bells, made from hollowed caribou horn, or moose hooves threaded on a piece of line from which they could be swung. For amusement youths made willow whistles in the spring. Apart from potlatch chants and songs for gambling, love, and mourning, people sang to secure good weather and favorable hunting and fishing. Hunters knew specific, and presumably lucky, moose, ground hog, caribou, and beaver songs. All chants were generally wordless and in essence consisted of a few syllables repeated over and over in a minor key. The refrain of a potlatch song follows:

ha·ʔe ha·ʔe i·ʔe
ha·ʔe hi·i· ho·ho·ʔo
ha we hi· e·ʔe

Songs might be revealed in dreams or learned from one's father. People did not sing war songs.

Dancing provided a popular source of amusement. Sometimes the son of a headman led dancers in a circle while pounding a drum. During the potlatch people performed and clowned while covered with bark masks, the features of which were outlined with char-

[32] At the Tlingit potlatch animal masks and skins were worn to represent the crest animals. Swanton, *Social Condition, Beliefs and Linguistic Relationship of the Tlingit Indians* (1908), 435.

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431 coal. Other masks came from the head skins of black and grizzly bears, the goat, and sheep.

431 Potlatches were accompanied by games and sports, some of which included competi-
526 tions between teams recruited from opposite moieties. Popular sports including racing, tugs-of-war, blind-man's bluff, wrestling, target shooting, throwing, and gambling. Races took place between men, the end of a course sometimes being marked by the prize that would become the property of the winner. Thus an arrow thrust into a tree would be pulled out by the first contestant to reach the objective. Two spruce bark traveling canoes also raced, each containing a team selected on moiety lines. The winning team claimed the rival vessel as their prize. Three or four men engaged in swimming races, often to see who could cross a river quickest. Tugs-of-war also occurred between moieties. Customarily some boiled meat piled on one side of the playing ground constituted the prize of the winning side. The Kaska, one concludes, did not enjoy sport for its own sake but preferred to compete for some tangible reward. Men and women engaged in tugs-of-war, the sport being played with lines as well as with poles. Poles in turn were both pushed and pulled. Blind-man's-bluff found favor with children and adults. In this game one of the contestants had his eyes bound with caribou hide. Moving with outstretched arms toward the sound cues of the other participants he sought to grasp somebody's coat or arm. In a variety of this game a blindfolded individual sought to secure a marten skin hung in a tree. Success earned him the right to keep the prize. Wrestling matches endured for several hours, for as one contestant was overcome another stepped from the circle of onlookers to challenge the victor. Each defeated chal-
[171] lenger paid the victor in moccasins, a bow, or an arrow. Wrestling for women was denied but the informant, in typical fashion, remarked having heard of the practice among the Espatotena and "Mackenzie River Indians." Shooting with bow and arrows for a mark
525 on a tree or toward some other target rarely involved a prize. Sticks were also flung
633 across snow (snow scaling?) to see how far one could hit. Skin tossing and drag-skin games could not be recalled. People keenly relished gambling in the form of the stick game. Teams consisted of from five to ten men each. Instead of playing with the hands under a robe the contestants held their arms behind the back while they shuffled the pointed wooden token. Two drummers accompanied the players and simultaneously chanted "hŏ, hŏ, hŏ, hŏ." Should drums be unavailable the players themselves chanted in a moderately fast, double rhythm, six-eights time: "ha-ha, hu-hi, hi-ha, hu-hi."

527 Through feasts the Indians celebrated a youth's first successful hunt for large game,
431 a girl's return from her initial menstrual seclusion, and a youth's completion of his dream quest. Sometimes the feasts became potlatches. No mortuary feast took place but a "remembrance" potlatch occurred about one year after death. Potlatches were exchanged between moieties and followed a period of gift solicitation. Objects given to a potlatcher constituted outright gifts for the festival from which, in turn, all the givers derived prestige. The contributors received gifts when the opposite moiety repaid the potlatch. Only rich men provided a potlatch, their poorer fellows being unable to accumulate sufficient food or objects for such an undertaking. Clowning and masked dancing enlivened the give-away but nobody recalled the use of ceremonial wigs.

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married or single.[17] Such a description represents the aboriginal pattern of Dease River social organization. Each band recognized a "chief,"[18] or leader, who guided the people in hunting. Outstanding in his ability to secure game, a headman was also always a rich man. Sometimes as many as seven families comprised his following. As a headman aged and became incapacitated, he relinquished his role in favor of a son or brother whose duties included caring for the retired leader.

All the Dease River Indians were divided into two moieties, tsinii ("sides"), the Wolf and Crow. The two sections represented exogamous units in which membership followed the matrilineal line. Potlaches promoted interaction between the divisions, the members of which also prepared each other's dead for burial and competed in sports.[19]

Rich and poor men tended to stand out in the pre-contact community. The former represented able hunters who managed to secure large quantities of meat and skins. Such abundance attracted followers and dependents who accepted their patron's authority. Thus rich men also held positions of band leadership. The poor depended on the wealthy for food and skins. They made no return for such assistance. Sometimes a man became temporarily impoverished as a result of losing his hunting "luck." Help to such a man was advantageous because he would certainly remember the generosity when his fortunes turned. Poverty, as long as it did not stem from laziness, provided no bar to marriage, but a lazy man merited only laughter and jeers.[20]

[17] Allard, *Notes on the Kaska and Upper Liard Indians* (1928), 24–25.

[18] When the Hudson's Bay Company entered the Cassiar, they appointed local chiefs to develop trapping. The word is derived from this period. The "company chief" was provided with a certain amount of regalia and received flour and tobacco to distribute to his "boys." Upon the Indians' arrival at the post the manager fired a gun to salute the executive. Prior to this period, informants agreed, no comparable leader existed among the Dease River people.

[19] Teit reports a more complex social system for the adjoining Tahltan. "Their social organization appears to be based largely on that obtaining among the Tlingit. Like the latter, they are divided into two exogamous phratries called Wolf and Raven (as in the case of the Kaska, the former is more important and is said to represent the original Tahltan people). Children belong to the phratry and clan of their mother. Each phratry consists of three clans or gentes, each of which has a hereditary chief and a territory of its own. These six chiefs form the governing body of the tribe. The clans do not have special totems, nor traditions deriving their origin from mythological ancestors. Crests and totems usually belong to the phratry. A seventh clan exists at the present day, having originated about 150 years ago through immigration of and intermarriage with the Tlingit. It belongs to the Wolf phratry, but has no recognized territory nor chief within the country of the Tahltans; it is called by its Tlingit name. There is an aristocracy of rank and wealth, but these nobles have no special rights in hunting grounds, fisheries, etc. Methods of obtaining rank, the potlatch, and many of the social and ceremonial customs of the tribe are closely adopted from the Tlingit." (Teit, *On Tahltan (Athabaskan) Work* [1912], 484–485. See also Jenness, *Indians of Canada* [1932], 373.) Mrs. William Strong, of Vancouver and Telegraph Creek, B. C., loaned the present writer several photographs of a Tahltan potlatch held in relatively recent times. These showed men wearing dark cloth robes embroidered with what appeared to be crest figures and very similar to the robes often illustrated for the Northwest Coast.

In Lower Post we learned of only two exogamous moieties among the Tahltan, the Wolf and Crow. Teit's description of clans with territorial rights does not sound convincing and may refer to local divisions in the Tahltan nation.

[20] Slaves were reported for the Tahltan where one "chief," Makuske, is said to have held 22 captive workers. These hunted and fished for their master and were well treated. (Personal communication from